```
VZCZCXRO8789
RR RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHAE #0542 3171039
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
R 121039Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY ASMARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0004
INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FLFRFEKDIA/DIA WASD
RHRMDNIER DJ
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
```

S E C R E T ASMARA 000542

NOFORN
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E,
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/11/2018
TAGS: PGOV SO ER
SUBJECT: HARD-LINE ARS MEMBER TALKS OF MONEY, AWEYS, AND
AIDID

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for Reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: A contact from the hard-line ARS claims
Emboff that Gulf States were sending "hundreds of millions"
of dollars to the Eritrean government to support the ARS. He
also provided insight on both Sheik Dahir Aweys' and Hussein
Mohamed Farrah Aidid's roles in the ARS, as well as personal
background information on both individuals. The contact
shows extensive affinity for the U.S. and is open to further
contact. End Summary.

MILLIONS FROM THE GULF

¶2. (C) A second tier hard-line Alliance for the Reliberation
of Somalia (ARS) contact told Emboff that the Gulf States
send the Eritrean government "hundreds of millions" of
dollars to support the ARS in Eritrea. The contact listed
Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, and Iran as ARS contributors,
adding that the Government of the State of Eritrea (GSE)
skims "60%" of the contributions off the top. Because of the
importance of this source of revenue, the contact speculated
that the GSE wants to prolong the conflict in Somalia, and
that GSE officials have told ARS members to "slow down" when
reconciliation with Somalia's Transitional Federal Government
(TFG) is mentioned.

SHEIK DAHIR AWEYS

¶3. (S/NF) The contact said Aweys is the focal point of a
battle between hard-line ARS Islamists and Nationalists.
Both sides seek to win Aweys' full support and use his name
for additional influence with ordinary Somalis, although it
is the Islamists who control Aweys' movements in Asmara. The
contact added that Aweys seems to always keep hisotions
open ." Hard-line ARS members are trying to convince Aweys
to leave Asmara and return to Somali soon. Aweys is usually
accompanied by an unnamed driver, who is also the hard-line
ARS financial director and (according to the contact) a
"strict Islamist bad guy."

HUSSEIN MOHAMED FARRAH AIDID

¶4. (S/NF) Islamist hard-line ARS members believe "Aidid works
for the CIA." The contact, who is Aidid's second cousin and
with whom he has extremely close personal relationship, also
said Aidid and Aweys are related in two ways. One of Aidid's
wives is Awey's niece, and the two are also somehow related
through one of their mothers. Aidid, according to the
contact, is the only person who can truly influence Aweys,
and (due to their family relationship) is the only person who
can separate Aweys from his handlers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTACT

¶5. (S/NF) The contact is a Canadian/Somali dual-national
showing definite affinity for the U.S. and is open to
extensive further contact. He has a wife and child still in
Mogadishu, and asked for Emboff's assistance in obtaining
employment with an international organization working on
Somali issues. The contact claims to hate Somali Islamists
and originally fought on behalf of the TFG, but says he
changed sides after the Ethiopian military attacked his
neighborhood in Mogadishu. He claims to have fought next to
al Shabaab members and believes most of them are
"salvageable" if the fighting stops soon.

¶6. (S/NF) Comment: The contact was a rare find, given that
most hard-line ARS members spout party-line platitudes and
rarely show the slightest candor. His back-bencher status,
combined with his (claimed) extensive university education in
Canada and Australia, may be personally frustrating, since he
wants to be more actively involved in solvingQSQmalia's
proQlQms. This situation may lead to further conversations
with the contact, which may yield greater insights into the
ARS than were previously available. End Comment.
MCMULLEN